

FACTS, FANCIES, QUIPS & COMMENTS

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN PAPERS.

Mr T. A. Browne ("Rolf Boldrewood") who was born in London on August 6, 1826, and who is therefore in his 82nd year, started squatting or sheepfarming in Victoria, and later in New South Wales, when only 17 years of age. Successive droughts swept away his flocks, and he joined the Civil Service in the threefold capacity of stipendiary magistrate, coroner and goldfields warden. The experience he thus gained led him to write his first book, "Robbery Under Arms," which won world-wide fame. He was 36 years of age when he married the daughter of William Edward Riley, of Raby, New South Wales. The story goes that he met his wife in romantic circumstances. He had heard that a small gang of sheepstealers had made up their minds to "do for Browne" on account of the stern manner in which he had dealt with one of their "pals." The news was conveyed to the police magistrate by Miss Margaret Maria Riley, and it is probable that the warning saved his life. He managed to turn the tables by capturing the gang in their ambush, and married Miss Riley.

Cattleman Sydney Kidman enjoys a joke as much as any of his frisky steers (writes a correspondent in "The Critic"). He was once the cause of a green reporter on the Barrier almost losing his job. Kidman and several others had driven a mob of a couple of hundred of pigs over a big stretch of country, and the reporter called on K. to ask if that was his most unique experience. The cattle king pulled off a fairy yarn about a flock of turkeys he had once driven from Bourke to Broken Hill. The scribe asked: "But how did you get on at night, Mr Kidman?" "Oh," said K. in an indifferent tone, "the turkeys just roosted in the trees, and I sent men around every morning to collect the eggs." And the scribe swallowed the tale, and a believing editor published.

Very unobtrusively a famous American arrived in Melbourne the other day. This was Jack London, the author of the delightful books—"A White Fang," and "The Call to the Wild." He had kept his arrival a secret, and very few people knew he was coming. Mrs Tom Mann was there to meet a brother Socialist, and Mrs Southwell, wife of the manager who was to have toured Jack London as a lecturer. There was also Mr Champion, of the red tie and the Socialistic proclivities. The Socialists all looked for Jack London in the second-class end of the train. He was, of course, comfortably tucked away in the parlour car. Mrs London was with him. She is a charming American woman, with all the naivete, mixed with savoir faire, that characterise the United States woman. There was also a dear little Jap, the cabin boy of the Snark. Jack London's famous yacht, in which he was going round the world, The Londoners are about the nicest pair of Americans I have met. They are so quiet and modest and sweet. He is a charming man, who does not think much about himself at all. She is full up to the eyes with pride in her husband, and

properly, too. If I had a husband like that I'd be too proud to speak to ordinary people. Just at present Mrs London is anxiously looking after her husband. He is very ill. For nearly three months he has written nothing except that account of the fight which was published in Melbourne. It is all nerves, a mysterious disease that the doctors cannot explain or cure. Mrs London is a splendid nurse. She is constant in her care of her husband, but never lets him see it. She knows that with a case of nerves it is essential that the patient should not be allowed to know he is being tended. After meeting Mrs London I am more than ever at a loss to understand why she went to the fight as a spectacle. I firmly believe that she did not want to go at all. "Jack," however, left his bed in a private hospital to go to the fight, and I think Mrs London merely went to watch over him, and see that the excitement of the fight was not too much for him. When that complexion is put on her presence at the fight, it makes a heroine of her instead of an incomprehensibly curious woman. She told me herself that she felt very queer and sick occasionally during the fight. They will have gone to Hobart by the time you get this. Jack London hopes to find strength and renewed health in the cool mountain air of Tasmania.

O'Connor, the Southstralian, got seven Victorian wickets for 38 runs in the last match, and the ignominious defeat of the State is almost forgotten by Victorians in their Australian appreciation of the fact that another much-needed, serviceable bowler has come to the front—

We may invent a mono-rail,
Or something in ballooning;
Our Madane Melba may not fail
To knock the world at crooning.
We may discover planets new,
Or something fresh that's solar;
But what are all these trifles to
The fact that we have found a new
And quite effective bowler?

Speaking about the new Premier of Victoria, Mr John Murray, a Melbourne paper says:—"Indolence has been his besetting sin all through his political life. There is warrant for being sceptical about such a man reforming.

"Of other tyrants, short and strife,
But Indolence is King for life."

But there have been exceptions even to this rule. Mr Reid was one. He was a good-natured, easy-going, dilettante member when a stop-gap leader was wanted for the New South Wales Freetrade party. Sir Henry Parkes was failing. Sir (then Mr) William McMillan was not sufficiently well known to take up the running at once. It was decided that Mr Reid should keep the billet warm for him. Mr Reid kept it so snug that nobody but himself got into it afterwards. He threw off his slothfulness, and became active, alert and energetic. Mr Murray, having attained such a high place, may do the same. He has a big, broad, masculine intellect, and has given glimpses of great force and fixity of pur-

pose. The hour and the honour may bring the best of the man into play. Mr Watt as Treasurer is not a reassuring figure. If his ability were only equal to his ambition, he would be a Rothschild and a Rockefeller rolled into one, but that "what-oh-there!" swing of the arms limns a mental portrait of the King of the Push placed in charge of Sinbad's treasure. The Minister of Railways, Mr Hillson, is one of those men who become intoxicated with the exuberance of their own verbosity. If Mr Murray is wise, he will buy Mr Hillson a phonograph and let him work off his copious flow of words into it. It will be safer than letting him talk in the House. Mr Graham is a battle-scarred veteran, long-headed, slow-thinking, better at listening than talking, and endowed with an engaging frankness which covers a deep vein of shrewdness, which some of his critics call guile. If Sir Thomas Best had taken Mr McKenzie into his cabinet, he might still have been in authority, for Mr McKenzie is another of those level-headed, clever men of affairs, whom the country districts keep on sending into Parliament. Personal popularity is Mr Peter McBride's best claim to fame at present, but beneath a seemingly careless exterior he conceals industry, grip, and grit. With a fat cigar between his lips, he can work out a political problem or a situation as well as any man.

Whatever animosity may have been awakened against Johnson in Sydney, he has reversed the decision here (remarks a Melbourne journal). He is cheered nightly at the Melbourne Opera House, but his "turn" is the weakest and most silly thing I have ever seen. He ought to get on a pedestal as other men have done—Hackenschmidt, Sandow and others—and pose with the light showing up his muscles. His present turn to me is mere foolishness. However, he received an ovation the night I saw him. You know, the shop girl has made a hero of him. The shop girl is a curious creature. She lives in a world of his voice and his legs. English eric- she has just finished, and the other half-plagiarised from "The Scarlet Pimpernel," "Monsieur Beaucaire," or some similar heart-affecting drama. This world of hers has to have a hero in it. Generally it is Julius Knight, because of his voice and his legs. English eric- keters are always heroic. Now, Jack Johnson has been elevated to a place in the calendar of heroes. The shop girl buys photographs of him, and explains that it is only his skin that is black, and that his teeth are just lovely. She always did like gold fillings, and is thinking of having her own done. If you dare to show a suspicion of colour prejudice, she will haughtily inform you that the best man won, and that it is not Johnson's fault that he is black. If he had been white, and Burns black, the sympathy would have been the other way. That is so true that it almost forces you to believe that her next statement is true also, when she declares that Mrs Johnson ought to be proud of her husband, and proud of herself. She ought to be admired for her courage in showing that she did not care for such a small thing as the colour of a man's skin. The shop girl has already got over her love affair with the American Fleet. The Fleet had no sympathy for Coons. Besides, the Fleet has been to Japan since.

A MOTHER'S STORY.

DOCTORS ADVISED OPERATION —
BILE BEANS RESTORE ROBUST HEALTH.

In her following letter — which is a typical illustration of the unlimited praise past sufferers are ever ready to bestow on Bile Beans—Mrs. Peake, of Wright-street, Adelaide, S.A., voices the sentiments of thousands of her sex. Bile Beans are indeed the housewife's best friend, and their virtues are praised by grateful women throughout Australasia.

Mrs. Peake says:—"I have great pleasure in stating that Bile Beans are the best remedy I have ever used. Since the birth of my third child, five years ago, I have not known what good health was. I consulted some of the leading doctors here, and they told me nothing short of an operation would do me any good, and that I should have to lay up for some considerable time. Just as I was making up my mind what to do, I received one of your Bile Bean booklets. I had heard prior to this what a splendid medicine Bile Beans were, and after reading in the booklet some of the remarkable cures they had effected, I determined to give them a trial. After undergoing a course of Bile Beans to the extent of two boxes my health was restored, and I was as right as ever I was. It is a grand thing for women to know that they have such a friend in Bile Beans. I had tried dozens and dozens of other pills, but I might as well have thrown my money away. Bile Beans are a splendid family medicine, and my home is never without a box, as I firmly believe I owe many a year of my life to them. I cannot speak too highly in praise of Bile Beans."

A Bile Bean at noon and a Bile Bean at night, whenever sluggish liver or disordered stomach manifests itself, is the royal road to perfect health. Bile Beans quickly cure indigestion, biliousness, headache, constipation, piles, summer lag, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, and all family ailments. 1s. 1/6d. and 2s. 9d per box, of all chemists and stores.

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HEARNE'S BRONCHITIS CURE.

Those who have taken this medicine are amazed at its splendid healing power. Sufferers from Bronchitis, Cough, Croup, Asthma, Difficulty of Breathing, Hoarseness, Pain or Soreness in the Chest, experience delightful and rapid relief; and to those who are subject to Colds on the chest it is invaluable, as it effects a complete cure. It is most comforting in allaying Irritation in the Throat and giving Strength to the Voice, and it neither allows a Cough nor Asthma to become chronic, nor Consumption to develop. Consumption is not known where "Coughs" have, on their first appearance, been properly treated with this medicine. No house should be without it, as, taken at the beginning, a dose or two is generally sufficient, and a complete cure is certain.

Small Size, 2/6; Large Size, 4/6 Sold by all Chemists and Medicine Vendors, and by the Proprietor, W. G. HEARNE, Chemist, Geelong, Victoria. Forwarded to any Address, when not obtainable locally.